



U.S. Department
of Transportation
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials
Safety Administration

1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

JUN 24 2011

Mr. Randall L. Barnard
President, Gas Pipeline and Director
Williams Gas Pipeline – Transco
2800 Post Oak Boulevard
PO Box 1396, MD 11324
Level Twelve (12)
Houston, Texas 77056

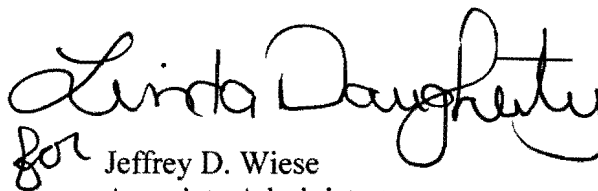
Re: CPF No. 4-2011-1001

Dear Mr. Barnard:

Enclosed please find the Final Order issued in the above-referenced case. It makes findings of violation and assesses a civil penalty of \$23,800. This is to acknowledge receipt of payment of the full penalty amount, by wire transfer, dated January 13, 2011. Therefore, this enforcement action is now closed. Service of the Final Order by certified mail is deemed effective upon the date of mailing, or as otherwise provided under 49 C.F.R. § 190.5.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,



for Jeffrey D. Wiese
Associate Administrator
for Pipeline Safety

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Alan Mayberry, Deputy Associate Administrator for Field Operations, Pipeline Safety
Mr. R.M. Seeley, Director, Southwest Region, PHMSA

Mr. Hjalmarson, Vice President, Williams Gas Pipeline – Transco, 2800 Post Oak
Boulevard, PO Box 1396, MD 11324, Level Twelve (12), Houston, Texas 77056

CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED [7005 1160 0001 0075 9411]

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PIPELINE AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF PIPELINE SAFETY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590**

In the Matter of)

Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company, LLC,)
a subsidiary of Williams Partners L.P.,)
also known as Williams Gas Pipeline- Transco,)

Respondent.)
_____)

CPF No. 4-2011-1001

FINAL ORDER

On October 18-20 and October 25-28, 2010, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 60117, a representative of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS), conducted an on-site pipeline safety inspection of the facilities and records of Williams Gas Pipeline - Transco (WGP or Respondent) in the Cypress Division District that runs from Edna, Texas to Kinder, Louisiana. At the time of the inspection, WGP operated three major natural gas transmission pipelines that deliver approximately 14 percent of the natural gas consumed in the United States.¹ Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company, LLC (Transco) operates an interstate natural gas transportation system that covers 10,000 miles and serves major markets in New York City, Atlanta, and the Mid-Atlantic region.

As a result of the inspection, the Director, Southwest Region, OPS (Director), issued to Respondent, by letter dated January 5, 2011, a Notice of Probable Violation and Proposed Civil Penalty (Notice). In accordance with 49 C.F.R. § 190.207, the Notice proposed finding that WGP violated 49 C.F.R. § 192.739(a) and proposed assessing a civil penalty of \$23,800 for the alleged violation.

WGP responded to the Notice by letter dated January 31, 2011 (Response). The company did not contest the allegation of violation and paid the proposed civil penalty of \$23,800, as provided in 49 C.F.R. § 190.227. Payment of the penalty serves to close the case with prejudice to the Respondent.

FINDING OF VIOLATION

In its Response, WGP did not contest the allegation in the Notice that it violated 49 C.F.R. Part 192, as follows:

¹ See http://www.williams.com/gas_pipeline/. (last accessed on May 6, 2011)

Item 1: The Notice alleged that Respondent violated 49 C.F.R. § 192.739(a), which states:

§ 192.739 Pressure limiting and regulating stations: Inspection and testing.

- (a) Each pressure limiting station, relief device (except rupture discs), and pressure regulating station and its equipment must be subjected at intervals not exceeding 15 months, but at least once each calendar year, to inspections and tests to determine that it is-
- (1) In good mechanical condition;
 - (2) Adequate from the standpoint of capacity and reliability of operation for the service in which it is employed;
 - (3) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, set to control or relieve at the correct pressure consistent with the pressure limits of § 192.201(a); and
 - (4) Properly installed and protected from dirt, liquids, or other conditions that might prevent proper operation.

The Notice alleged that Respondent violated 49 C.F.R. § 192.739(a) by failing to inspect and test relief devices at intervals not to exceed 15 months and at least once each calendar year. Specifically, the Notice alleged that WGP failed to inspect and properly operate relief devices for eight compressor units at Station 45 in accordance with the regulatory timeframe. WGP Operations & Maintenance Manual² states that "It is the policy of WGP to inspect and test each regulator, relief valve and other overpressure protection device used in natural gas service once each calendar year, not to exceed 15 months. . ." However, WGP's Relief Valve Inspection Reports indicate that inspection and testing of the eight compressor units at Station 45 occurred on various dates in the months of December 2006 and January 2008. Respondent conducted no inspections of these compressor units in 2007 and therefore failed to meet the calendar year mandate for inspection and testing of relief devices.

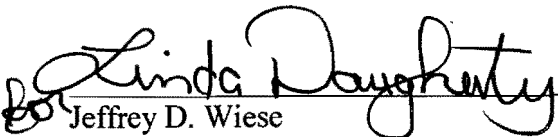
Respondent did not contest this allegation of violation.

Accordingly, based upon a review of all of the evidence, I find that Respondent violated 49 C.F.R. § 192.739(a) by failing to inspect and test relief valves at intervals not to exceed 15 months and at least once every calendar year. I assess Respondent a civil penalty of \$23,800 for the violation, which has been paid.

The terms and conditions of this Final Order are effective upon service in accordance with 49 C.F.R. § 190.5.

JUN 24 2011

Date Issued


Jeffrey D. Wiese
Associate Administrator
for Pipeline Safety

² Measurement Policy 60.02.00.13: "Regulator and Overpressure Protection Systems," Frequency 2.1.